

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 16-28, and 30 are pending in the application. Claims 5, 6, 8, 13, 15 and 29 are canceled.

It is noted that Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 29 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format. Accordingly, claims 2 and 29 have been incorporated into their respective parent claims.

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-14, and 17-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,003,315 to Kiyomoto et al., further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0192224 to Arimitsu, and further yet in view of US Patent No. 4,554,656 to Budrikis. Claims 8 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kiyomoto/Arimitsu/Budrikis, and further yet in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,363,246 to Williams.

Applicant has incorporated the content of claim 29, indicated as allowable, into independent claim 20, and similarly dependent claim 2 into independent claim 1, thereby rendering moot these rejections.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 16-28, and 30, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Serial No. 10/806,436
Docket No. 87283/03 (NEC.287)

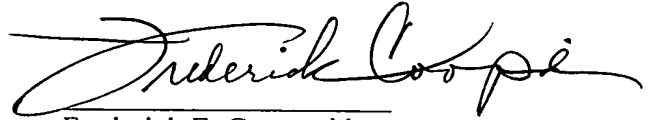
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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

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